

THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL MARKETING

304 Social Marketing Tools

In order to assist the LIA contractors in applying SEM to programming, the Network has developed a number of social marketing tools. The following paper, *The P's and T's of Social Marketing*, by Susan B. Foerster, M.P.H., RD, Chief, Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section, examines these tools. When developing a Network SOW, please consider how these social marketing tools will be used in the activities. It is appropriate to apply different social marketing tools at the various levels of SEM. Also refer to Section III. Subsection 306 for appropriate social marketing tools to use at each level of the SEM. For specific questions relating to the application of the Network's social marketing tools, please call your Program Manager.

The "P's" and T's of Social Marketing through the California Nutrition Network and California 5 a Day Campaign

Introduction: Social marketing is an evolving field, and how it is defined and executed in fact varies by topic, sponsoring organization, mandate, and resources. Social marketing is gaining popularity because it is inclusive, provides new strategies and tools to tackle tough social concerns, builds on proven marketing science, provides a bridge to working with the private sector, and has been used successfully in both the developing and the developed world.

The Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section (CPNS) has selected the combination of tools it applies in its Food Stamp-funded social marketing campaigns using experience with the *California 5 a Day Campaign* and the National 5 A Day Program, tools described in social marketing textbooks and articles, and observations about what is applicable and can be transferred or adapted from other successful social change programs[1]. Social marketing is an approach, not a theory, so we have adopted the Social-Ecological Model as a means of systematically guiding how we set priorities for action, of building synergy and integrating interventions, of allocating resources, and of evaluating results achieved by a diverse array of partners[1].

This thinking has yielded what might be seen as an eclectic definition for social marketing that goes beyond most textbook descriptions. It is based on a subjective assessment of the combination of tools that is likely to be the most powerful in the hands of the Network partners for the purposes of improving fruit and vegetable consumption, increasing physical activity, and raising participation in federal nutrition assistance programs by low income families with children. As stated in our annual plan to USDA, we name the tools used by our social marketing campaign as being:

... the traditional mix of **advertising, publicity, promotion and personal sales** used in commercial marketing delivered through **public/private partnerships** to which are added to the World Health Organization components of **community development, consumer empowerment, and policy, environmental and systems change, and—most recently—media advocacy.**

Foundations of the California approach: The 4 P's of commercial marketing routinely adapted to social marketing are defined as:

Product— In commercial marketing, the product is the idea, behavior, good or service that can be exchanged for a price. The product can be tangible or intangible [2]. In social marketing, the product is often the behavior or health idea that the campaign planners would like the targeted individuals to adopt. The product can be an action, a service, or a set of beliefs. [3, 4].

Price—Price is the cost to the target audience of making an exchange. In commercial marketing, price is almost always financial. [2]. With social change, price defines all the barriers that a person must overcome to accept the proposed social product. This includes opportunity cost, status loss, embarrassment, and infringement on basic values and time. [2-4].

Place—In commercial marketing, place is the outlet through which products are available. Place can also be conceptualized as characteristics of the outlet such as waiting time, staff behavior, temperature or other environmental conditions. In social marketing, place often is conceptualized as message delivery channels, or the system through which the products flow to users and the quality of service offered where the products are offered [2]. Place focuses largely on reducing structural obstacles and increasing access and developing a sales force of lay and professional service providers [3].

Promotion—Promotion includes *advertising, public relations, sales promotions, and personal sales* [2]. Promotion is the communication persuasion strategy and set of tactics that will make the “product” familiar, acceptable and desirable [5]. It is designed to cultivate positive attitudes and intentions that pave the way for behavior change [4]. It can be characterized as intermittent, seasonal, or thematic; it is designed to pique consumer interest; and it may target intermediaries rather than consumers. Promotion includes decisions on messages (what is to be said about the behavior and its benefits) and decisions on the channels (how that message gets to the right people at the right time) [3].

As applied in the California campaigns, the four tools of promotion are defined as:

- ***Paid or public service advertising*** for television, radio, outdoor, transit and a variety of targeted and “small” media, including newsletters, posters, and the Internet [2].
- ***Public relations or publicity*** is outreach activity designed to secure news attention in the print or electronic media. It may be done through TV or radio appearances, press conferences, desk-side briefings, and opinion editorial columns [5].
- ***Sales promotions*** are certain timeframes selected to advance specific messages or themes; they provide paid and voluntary support of special events, materials and incentives; and they work with multiple partners, especially at “point of sale” or “point of choice” to gain maximum media and consumer attention so as to stimulate interest, acceptance, trial or repeat “product purchase” [5]. Sales promotions may also include special educational activities for individuals in a direct audience (rather than a filtered audience such as media) and not directly news-related, such as festival and grocery store activities [2]. They can be defined as efforts taken to ensure that the target audience is aware of the campaign.

- **Personal sales** are traditional one-on-one or small group nutrition education[6]. In marketing terms, this is a paid form of personal presentation of products, services or ideas by an identified sponsor [5].

Transforming the “4 P’s” of commercial marketing to the “6 P’s” of social marketing: The traditional “4 P’s” of commercial marketing are combined with additional *P’s* recommended by some social marketing authors:

- **Partnerships**—Social networks that exist formally or informally among individuals, groups, and organizations. They may be assessed by the number, type, depth, and strength of relationship[1]. They can have significant impact when they cut across the public, non-profit and business sectors and operate at multiple levels of influence, namely state, local, regional and national.
- **Policy, Systems and Environmental Change**—local, state and national written policies that regulate or support organizational behavior, including protection of children and special populations[7]. For the *Network* and *California 5 a Day Campaign*, would include policy changes in the public, non-profit or business sectors. For organizational development and using modified stage theory, this includes problem definition, initiation of action, implementation of change, and institutionalization of change within an organization[1].

Tools that complete our social marketing tool case: To the “6 P’s” of social marketing, some social marketing authors advocate the addition of a few more “T’s” (tools). They argue, and we agree, that many social concerns are rooted in issues of social justice and require a shift in power to consumers[7]. In particular, residents in lower income areas may not have had the opportunity or known how to exercise their power in order to build healthy, vital communities that are rich in social capital and able to support healthy behaviors. These additional “Quarks/Qualities” are:

- **Consumer empowerment**—the process of gaining mastery and power over oneself to produce change[6]. Specifically, it refers to an individual’s ability to make decisions and have control over his or her personal life. It combines personal efficacy and competence, a sense of mastery and control, and a process of participation to influence institutions and decisions [8, 9].

Community empowerment/development—Community empowerment is the process of gaining mastery and power over one’s community to produce change [6]. Individuals and organizations apply their skills and resources in collective efforts to meet their respective needs, resulting in a community that has the ability to influence decisions and changes in the larger social system[8]. For program managers, empowerment is to enable others, or give other abilities so they can obtain power through their own abilities[8]. Community empowerment is a component of community development because the goal of community development is for people in the community to identify and solve their own problems. It stresses consensus development, capacity building, and task orientation[6]. This can also be characterized as Asset-Based Planning or Community Development[10]. This approach will help develop cohesive, caring neighborhoods and communities; it may involve connecting communities with existing resources, know-how, and decision-makers in public, non-profit or business sectors; and it may include economic development and micro-enterprise.

Media advocacy—Media advocacy is when media is used to promote a policy agenda [11, 12]. It includes three basic steps: setting the agenda, shaping the debate, and advancing the policy. There is a clear outcome of social change resulting from the media advocacy work. Other tools to help bring social change using media include civic journalism and photo voice.

In our campaigns, we aim to achieve efficiency much as a corporation would. We think at the State level in terms of large market segments defined by demographic, psychographics and media graphic characteristics. Based on these factors and our funding requirements, we set targets, define strategies, and think through the “6 P’s” for the statewide campaign. This is reasonable because the same motivations and barriers affect millions of people, and behavior is rooted in powerful social and marketplace forces that affect large segments, if not the entire population. Planning with stakeholders through the Joint Steering Committee, formative research with consumers and intermediaries, and pilot testing with evaluation drive the State level processes. The State staff then assists its partners by providing those and other resources such as training, technical assistance and federal funding to enable local, regional and state organizations to work together and to tailor the promotional, educational, community development, partnership, and systems, policy and environmental interventions to their own circumstances.

To assure salience at the local level or within a channel, funded partners are encouraged to conduct their own needs assessment, identify assets that include those of the new partnership, and plan their interventions strategically using as many of the 9 social marketing tools as are appropriate. We encourage their emphasizing interventions that reach large numbers of consumers; result in systems, environment and policy improvements; and otherwise result in more long-lasting social change. A feedback loop with ongoing surveillance, reporting of activities and results, and critical analysis by the partners is created. Staff uses this information to prepare each year’s state plan that is submitted to the USDA Food Stamp Program.

The strength of the campaign comes from each partner using the “added value” provided by the central State resources in order to do better those things it already does well in its own spheres of influence. “Doing better” would include: joining forces with other partners to do more and larger interventions, synchronizing interventions that cumulatively result in execution of a complete social marketing campaign plan, and critically interpreting the evaluation results and the changing external environment so as to continually improve campaign operations.

That said, because the environment is constantly changing, the partners also must remain alert, nimble, and ready to seize new opportunities that advance its aims while at the same time retaining focus and allegiance to the overarching strategies.